Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 018759

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NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR LEWIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, IS, US, XF
SUBJECT: WEIZMAN'S TRIP TO WASHINGTON

1. ROY ATHERTON AND I MET WITH WEIZMAN THIS EVENING, JANUARY 23, AT HIS REQUEST. I AM REPORTING SEPARATELY ON HIS APPRECIATION OF THE GENERAL NEGOTIATING SIUATION AND POSSIBLE WAYS TO GET IT BACK ON THE TRACK. HIS FIRST CONCERN, HOWEVER, WAS HIS IMPENDING TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES.

2. WEIZMAN HAS COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT HE OUGHT TO POSTPONE HIS TRIP IN ORDER TO GIVE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO A POSSIBLE

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RETURN TO THE CAIRO MILITARY COMMITTEE. HE BELIEVES THAT IT COULD WELL COMPLICATE MATTERS FURTHER WITH THE EGYPTIANS IF HE COMES TO WASHINGTON AT THIS TIME, AND HE THINKS HE OUGHT TO STAY CLOSE TO JERUSALEM WHILE IMPORTANT DECISIONS ARE BEING DISCUSSED CONCERNING THE NEGOTIATING STRATEGY AND TACTICS PURSUED BY THE ISRAELIS. HE HAS NOT YET DIS-CUSSED THIS WITH BEGIN, BUT WANTED TO GET MY REACTION

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AND WASHINGTON'S BEFORE DOING SO.

3. ROY AND I REALIZE THIS IS A MATTER WHICH LIES
IN HAROLD BROWN'S COURT SINCE WEIZMAN WILL BE HIS
OFFICIAL GUEST. BUT THE ISSUE IS PUT TO US IN A
DIPLOMATIC RATHER THAN A MILITARY CONTEXT AND WE
THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF YOU DISCUSSED IT DIRECTLY
WITH BROWN.

4. WEIZMAN ASKS IF WE COULD OBTAIN QUICKLY FOR
HIM AN ANSWER TO ONE QUESTION: WHETHER DELAYING HIS
VISIT WOULD AFFECT ADVERSELY ANY OF THE ARMS SUPPLY
DECISIONS WHICH ARE PENDING. (EVEN IF THAT WERE THE
CASE, HE SAID THAT A COUPLE OF MONTHS DELAY IN GETTING
F-16'S WAS LESS IMPORTANT IN HIS JUDGMENT THAN
KEEPING THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS FROM GOING IRREVOCABLY
OFF THE TRACKS.) WE SAID THAT WE DOUBTED THAT A DELAY
WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT BUT WE WOULD CHECK IMMEDIATELY
WITH WASHINGTON AND WOULD TRY TO GET HIM AN ANSWER
TOMORROW, JANUARY 24. IN ANSWER TO BY QUESTION, WEIZMAN
MADE CLEAR THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM IF PENDING
DECSIIONS WERE MADE AND ANNOUNCED BEFORE HIS VISIT; HE
DOES NOT CARE WHETHER HE "BRINGS BACK THE GOODIES HIM-
SELF OR NOT." IN FACT, HE SAID HE WOULD REALLY PREFER
TO DELINK HIS TRIP WITH HARDWARE DECISIONS AND TO CONCENTRATE
ON DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON OF LONG-TERM STRATEGY AND OF
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THE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY NEGOTIATIONS.
HE SEEMED PREPARED TO DELAY AS LONG AS MARCH, RECALLING
THAT HAROLD BROWN HAD EARLIER SAID HIS SCHDULE WAS
VERY FULL IN FEBRUARY AND ANY DELAY WOULD HAVE TO
BE UNTIL MID-MARCH IF IT OCCURRED. HOWEVER, ROY AND I
ASSUME THAT YOU COULD PERSUADE BROWN TO JUGGLE HIS SCHEDULE
SUFFICIENTLY FOR A VISIT IN MID OR LATE FEBRUARY IF
WEIZMAN URGED THAT SORT OF SCHEDULE.

5. BEGIN MIGHT CONCEIVABLY WISH HIM TO GO ON SCHEDULE
IN ANY EVENT. BUT WEIZMAN IS DETERMINED I THINK TO CONVINCE
HIM THAT A DELAY WOULD SERVE IMPORTANT DIPLOMATIC AND
POLITICAL PURPOSES. IF WE CAN TELL HIM QUICKLY THAT DELAY
WOULD NOT AFFECT ADVERSELY WASHINGTON DECISION ON MAJOR
SUPPLY ISSUES, THEN I THINK HE WILL DEFINITELY DECIDE TO
COME AT A LATER POINT.

6. ROY MAKES THE POINT THAT POSTPONEMENT OF WEIZMAN VISIT
WOULD OBVIOUSLY MAKE MANAGEMENT OF MILITARY DECISIONS FOR
ISRAEL MORE MANAGEABLE WITH THE ARABS, SINCE IT WOULD LOWER
VISIBILITY AND MEDIA ATTENTION TO CONTEXT IN WHICH THOSE
DECISIONS ARE TAKEN. WEIZMAN HIMSELF HINTED AT THIS

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ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION. NOTING THAT ISRAELI MEDIA WOULD SEEK TO PORTRAY POSTPONEMENT AS RESULT OF US PRESSURE, HE SAID HE WOULD MAKE CLEAR IT WAS HIS IDEA.

7. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO TEL AVIV.
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